

# Internet Explorer Security

Rob Franco  
Lead Program Manager  
Microsoft Corporation

# Overview

- Background on Web Browser Vulnerabilities
- Designed for security
  - Security updates for existing products
  - Security enhancements for IE in XP SP2
  - Security enhancements for trustworthy browsing in Longhorn

# Browser Vulnerabilities

- All Web Clients face similar vulnerabilities
  - Cross Domain
  - Malicious Downloads
  - Spoofing
  - Vulnerable extensibility (eg. ActiveX or Plug-in)
  - Buffer Overruns

*demo*

UI Spoofing with of a  
fullscreen window

*demo*

UI Spoofing with of a  
fullscreen window

*demo*

UI Spec of a  
fullscreen window





[MSN Home](#) [My MSN](#) [Hotmail](#) [Messenger](#) [What's new in MSN Search](#)

[Make MSN Search your homepage](#)

© 2005 Microsoft

[MSN Home](#) [My MSN](#) [Hotmail](#) [Messenger](#) [What's new in MSN Search](#)

[Make MSN Search your homepage](#)

© 2005 Microsoft





# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Cross Domain

## Cross Domain

- Can affect any client software
- Allows the attacker to inject or steal data from another domain on the user's behalf



# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Cross Domain

Mobile code has to go through a domain check in order to access the element.

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	GREEN
Size	32
Text	Important Data
Domain	www.abc.com



Important Data

Script	MyH.color="RED"
Domain	www.abc.com

# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Cross Domain

Mobile code has to go through a domain check in order to access the element.

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	GREEN
Size	32
Text	Important Data

Important Data

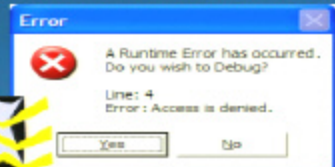
	Script	MyH.color="RED"
--	--------	-----------------

Domain	www	
	Domain	www.abc.com

# Cross Domain Security

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

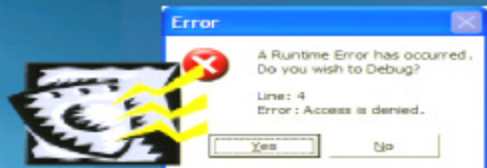
Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	Green
Size	32
Text	Important Data
Domain	www.abc.com



# Cross Domain Security

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	Green
Size	32
Text	Important Data
Domain	www.abc.com



# Cross Domain Security

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	Green
Size	32
Text	Important Data
Domain	www.abc.com



Important Data



Script	MyH.color="RED"
Domain	www.evil.com



# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Cross Domain

Mobile code has to go through a domain check in order to access the element.

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	GREEN
Size	32
Text	Important Data
Domain	www.abc.com



Important Data

Script	MyH.color="RED"
Domain	www.abc.com



# Cross Domain Security

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	Green
Size	32
Text	Important Data
Domain	www.abc.com



Important Data

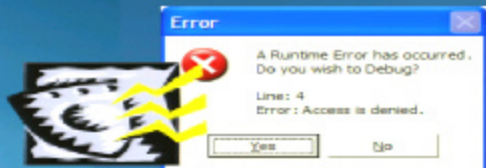


Script	MyH.color="RED"
Domain	www.evil.com

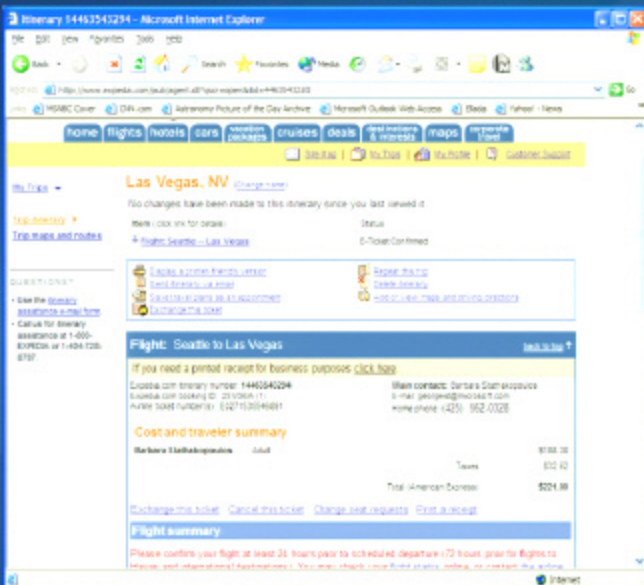
# Cross Domain Security

**RULE #1 : Only Script from the same domain can access an element**

Element	<H>
ID	MyH
Color	Green
Size	32
Text	Important Data
Domain	www.abc.com



## Cross Domain Security Exploits



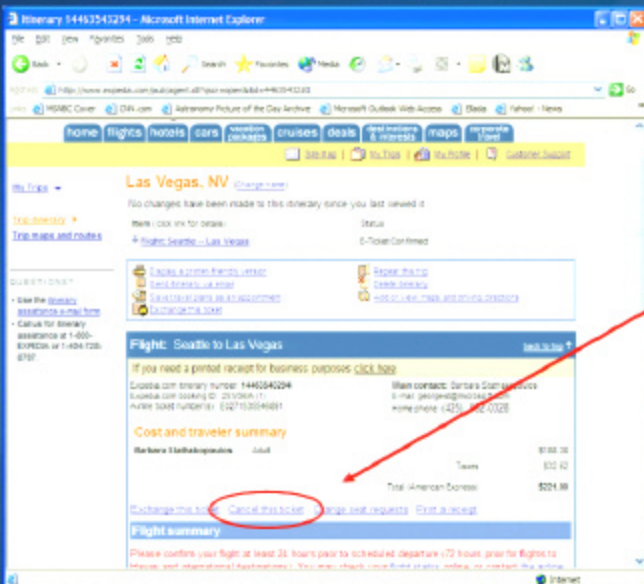
<A> ID=A2003 19834

href="/pub/agent.dll?oscr=cncl&itid=44635432&itdx=0&acmd=afit&vwtp=2">

[Cancel this ticket](#)

 $\langle I_A \rangle$

## Cross Domain Security Exploits



```
x=window.open("www.expedia.com");
```

```
x.item(A2003_19834).navigate:
```



<A> ID=A2003 19834

href="/pub/agent.dll?oscr=cncl&itid=44635432&itdx=0&acmd=afit&vwtp=2">

[Cancel this ticket](#)

 $\langle I_A \rangle$

# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Malicious downloads

Web browsers should not automatically download dangerous file types like .exe, .bat, .cmd or .hta

- However...
  - Web servers may provide bogus file type information designed to trick file download logic
  - Web servers may encode the file name to hide a dangerous file extension
- .. and sometimes users are just nagged into downloading a malicious exe



# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Malicious downloads

Web browsers should not automatically download dangerous file types like .exe, .bat, .cmd or .hta

- However...
  - Web servers may provide bogus file type information designed to trick file download logic
  - Web servers may encode the file name to hide a dangerous file extension
- .. and sometimes users are just nagged into downloading a malicious exe





# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Malicious downloads

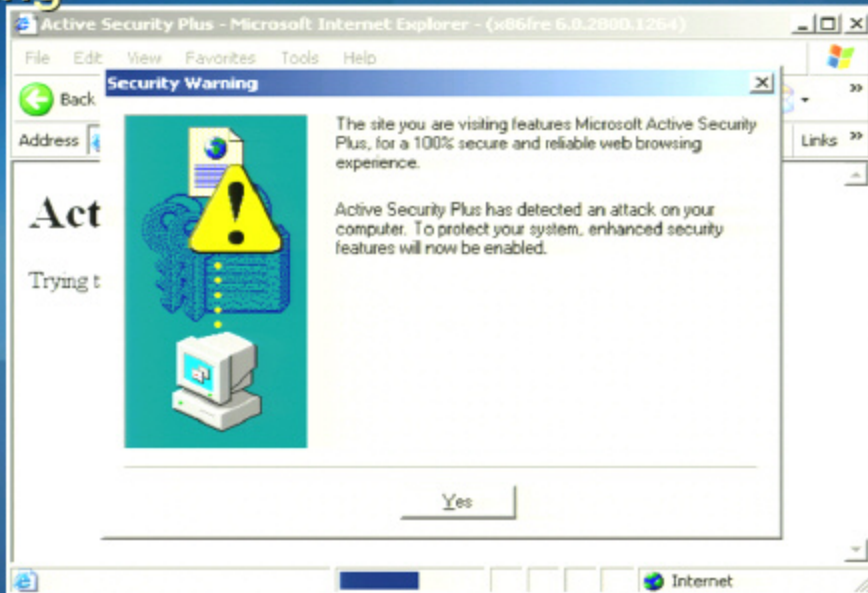
Web browsers should not automatically download dangerous file types like .exe, .bat, .cmd or .hta

- However...
  - Web servers may provide bogus file type information designed to trick file download logic
  - Web servers may encode the file name to hide a dangerous file extension
- .. and sometimes users are just nagged into downloading a malicious exe



# Browser Vulnerabilities

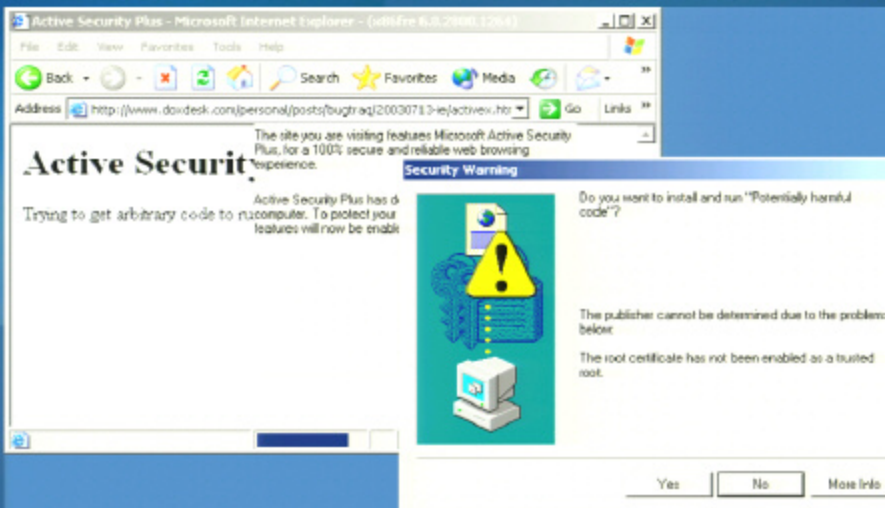
## Spoofing





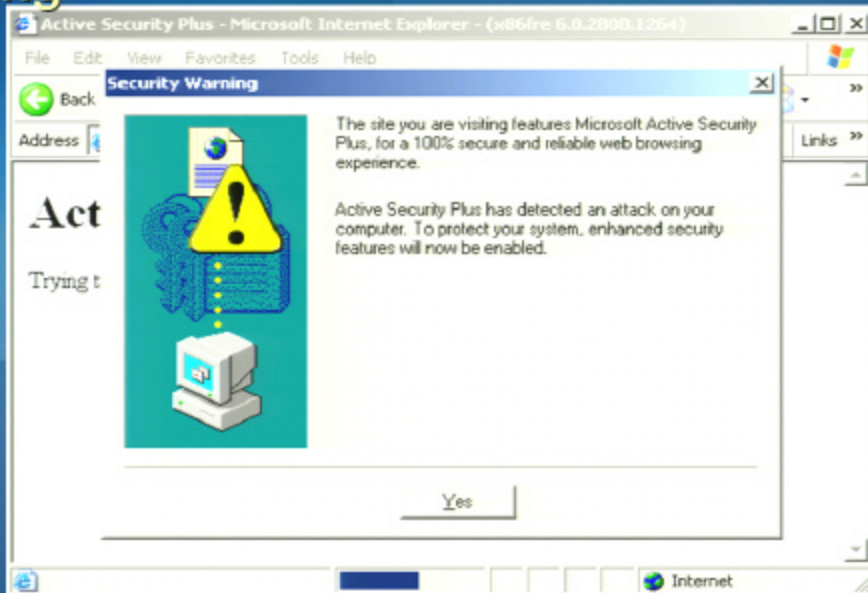
# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Spoofing



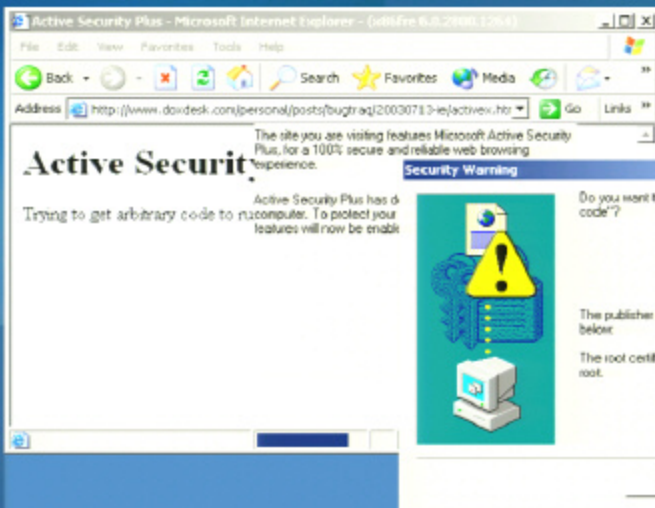
# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Spoofing



# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Spoofing



# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Vulnerable ActiveX/extensibility

- Developers writing binary extensibility have to implement their own
  - Cross Domain Security
  - Cross Site Scripting Security
  - Buffer Overrun Protection
- Developers can make their controls SFI/SFS and sign them but they have to implement their own security when the controls expose dangerous functions
- A dangerous function usually enables functionality that circumvents the Browsers security
- If a control exposed dangerous function it must protect against use by an evil site

### Dangerous Functions

Access the File System

Access a device such as

- microphones
- modems
- printers

Launch Programs

Change Security Settings

Write in Registry

Shutting down the system

Accessing Address books

Access Browsing history

Installing Files

Logging users

Enable File Transfer



# Browser Vulnerabilities

## Buffer Overruns

Element	<IMG>
SRC	..\BufferOverrun.jpg
Domain	www.evil.com



```
<H1>  
<IMG SRC = "xxx...xxx">  
George  
</H1>
```

```
szImagePath[20];  
strcpy(szImagePath, "xxx...xxx");
```



### Goal:

Find a place where the parser does not check for size of an argument



# Designed for Security

- Security investments are driven by customer benefit
  - Security Updates address known issues and ship through Windows Update
    - Fixes are targeted at specific vulnerabilities to preserve AppCompat
    - Customer hotfix binaries are also updated with the same security fixes
  - Major releases include aggressive security improvements
    - Enhanced security rules mitigate entire classes of attacks
    - End-user features educate and provide more control over security decisions
    - Compat workarounds are where-ever possible to ease deployment
- **\*All\*** changes go through threat modeling, penetration testing and code analysis tools

# Designed for Security

## IE for XP SP2

- With IE for XP SP2 you can
  - Browse anywhere and have a safer Internet experience
  - Avoid unwanted pop-up windows and downloads
  - Continue to use your existing applications and favorite websites with few problems



*demo*

Local Machine Zone  
Lockdown

*demo*

Local Machine Zone  
Lockdown

**Network Access Message: The website cannot be found**

**Explanation:** The IP address for the website you requested could not be found.

**Try the following:**

- **Refresh page:** Search for the page again by clicking the Refresh button. The timeout may have occurred due to Internet congestion.
- **Check spelling:** Check that you typed the Web page address correctly. The address may have been mistyped.
- **Access from a link:** If there is a link to the page you are looking for, try accessing the page from that link.

If you are still not able to view the requested page, try contacting your administrator or Helpdesk.

**Technical Information (for support personnel)**

- Error Code 13001: Host not found
- Background: This error indicates that the gateway could not find the IP address of the website you are trying to access. This is usually due to a DNS-related error.
- Date: 3/3/2005 7:37:38 PM
- Server: RED-PRXY-05.redmond.corp.microsoft.com
- Source: DNS error

**Network Access Message: The website cannot be found**

**Explanation:** The IP address for the website you requested could not be found.

**Try the following:**

- **Refresh page:** Search for the page again by clicking the Refresh button. The timeout may have occurred due to Internet congestion.
- **Check spelling:** Check that you typed the Web page address correctly. The address may have been mistyped.
- **Access from a link:** If there is a link to the page you are looking for, try accessing the page from that link.

If you are still not able to view the requested page, try contacting your administrator or Helpdesk.

**Technical Information (for support personnel)**

- Error Code 13001: Host not found
- Background: This error indicates that the gateway could not find the IP address of the website you are trying to access. This is usually due to a DNS-related error.
- Date: 3/3/2005 7:37:38 PM
- Server: RED-PRXY-05.redmond.corp.microsoft.com
- Source: DNS error



C:\inetpub\wwwroot\Security\_MVP\LMZLockdown\activeDHTMLContent.htm

To help protect your security, Internet Explorer has restricted this file from showing active content that could access your computer. Click here for options...

[Click this button](#)



File Edit View Favorites Tools Help  
C:\inetpub\wwwroot\Security\_MVP\LMZ\Lockdown\activeDHTMLContent.htm

To help protect your security, Internet Explorer has restricted this file from showing active content that could access your computer. Click here for options...

Click this button

Allow Blocked Content...  
What's the Risk?  
Information Bar Help



File Edit View Favorites Tools Help  
C:\inetpub\wwwroot\Security\_MVP\LMZLockdown\activeDHTMLContent.htm

To help protect your security, Internet Explorer has restricted this file from showing active content that could access your computer. Click here for options...

Click this button

# Security Warning



Allowing active content such as script and ActiveX controls can be useful, but active content might also harm your computer.

Are you sure you want to let this file run active content?

Yes

No



Click this button



# Designed for Security

## IE for XP SP2

- More protection against **Spoofing**
  - Restricts scripted windows in the internet zone
- More protection against **Vulnerable ActiveX/Extensibility**
  - Blocks automatic downloads of ActiveX controls
  - ActiveX Ctrls and BHOs can be managed with the Manage Add-ons control panel
  - Blocks the download of test-signed ActiveX
  - Blocks the use of Binary Behaviors in email scenarios
  - Fewer ActiveX controls are included in Windows by default
- More protection against **Buffer Overruns** through automated code improvements

*demo*

Automatic Download  
blocking



*demo*

Automatic Download  
blocking

# Lessons Learned from SP2

- Customers need Security \*and\* Compat
  - Beta feedback tunes the balance
  - All mitigations are designed for IE first and opt-in for other apps that host IE
  - Compat workarounds must be simple and effective
- Vulns found since SP2 have us treating historic vulns as if they are living threats
  - ActiveX controls expand the attack surface
  - Drag and Drop
- Further response needed against emerging threats
  - Spyware downloads through vulnerabilities
  - Phishing sites that spoof users to give up personal info

# Lessons Learned from SP2

- Customers need Security \*and\* Compat
  - Beta feedback tunes the balance
  - All mitigations are designed for IE first and opt-in for other apps that host IE
  - Compat workarounds must be simple and effective
- Vulns found since SP2 have us treating historic vulns as if they are living threats
  - ActiveX controls expand the attack surface
  - Drag and Drop
- Further response needed against emerging threats
  - Spyware downloads through vulnerabilities
  - Phishing sites that spoof users to give up personal info



# Designed for Security

## IE for Longhorn

- Architecture changes
  - Hardened Cross Domain boundary
  - Hardened URL Parsing logic
  - IE may run with lower privilege
- More secure defaults for extensibility
  - Info Bar for pre-installed ActiveX
  - Safe-boot IE runs with no addons
- Anti-phishing features
  - Fraud-retardant address bar and SSL indicators
  - Anti-phishing service to protect users from known phishing URLs
- Keep your browsing information private
  - Clear your browsing history in one location



# Designed for Security

## IE for Longhorn

- Architecture changes
  - Hardened Cross Domain boundary
  - Hardened URL Parsing logic
  - IE may run with lower privilege
- More secure defaults for extensibility
  - Info Bar for pre-installed ActiveX
  - Safe-boot IE runs with no addons
- Anti-phishing features
  - Fraud-retardant address bar and SSL indicators
  - Anti-phishing service to protect users from known phishing URLs
- Keep your browsing information private
  - Clear your browsing history in one location

# Designed for Security

## IE for Longhorn

- Architecture changes
  - Hardened Cross Domain boundary
  - Hardened URL Parsing logic
  - IE may run with lower privilege
- More secure defaults for extensibility
  - Info Bar for pre-installed ActiveX
  - Safe-boot IE runs with no addons
- Anti-phishing features
  - Fraud-retardant address bar and SSL indicators
  - Anti-phishing service to protect users from known phishing URLs
- Keep your browsing information private
  - Clear your browsing history in one location

# Designed for Security

## IE for Longhorn

- Architecture changes
  - Hardened Cross Domain boundary
  - Hardened URL
  - IE may run with less privilege
- More secure defaults
  - Info Bar for privacy
  - Safe-boot IE
- Anti-phishing features
  - Fraud-retardant address bar and SSL indicators
  - Anti-phishing service to protect users from known phishing URLs
- Keep your browsing information private
  - Clear your browsing history in one location



# Designed for Security

## IE for Longhorn

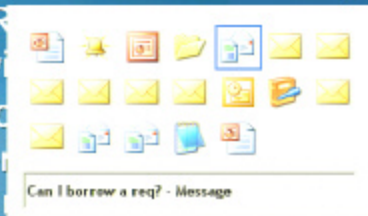
- Architecture changes
  - Hardened Cross Domain boundary
  - Hardened URL Parsing logic
  - IE may run with lower privilege
- More secure defaults for extensibility
  - Info Bar for pre-installed ActiveX
  - Safe-boot IE runs with no addons
- Anti-phishing features
  - Fraud-retardant address bar and SSL indicators
  - Anti-phishing service to protect users from known phishing URLs
- Keep your browsing information private
  - Clear your browsing history in one location

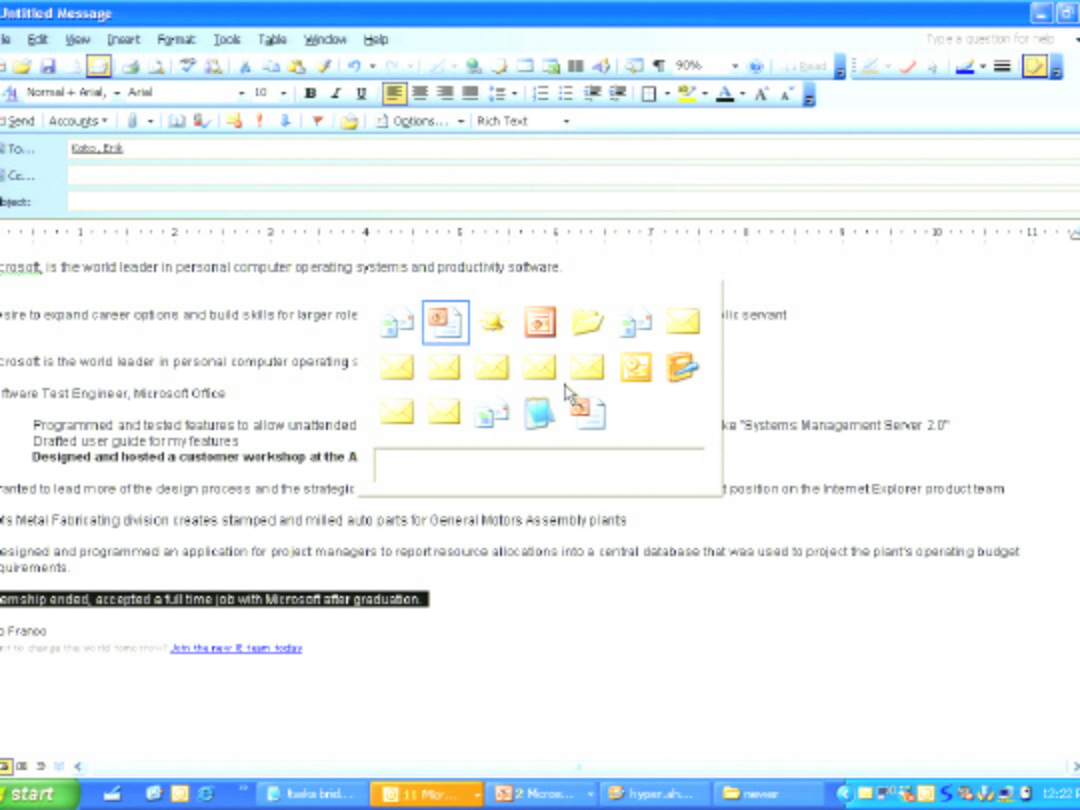


# Designed for Security

## IE for Longhorn

- Architecture changes
  - Hardened Cross Domain boundary
  - Hardened URL
  - IE may run with less privilege
- More secure defaults
  - Info Bar for protection
  - Safe-boot IE
- Anti-phishing features
  - Fraud-retardant address bar and SSL indicators
  - Anti-phishing service to protect users from known phishing URLs
- Keep your browsing information private
  - Clear your browsing history in one location













- Eg.  
<http://www.dsc.com>@<http://www.bedgums.com>
- IE for XP SP2 fights phishing with pop-up blocking and improved UI – Summer '04
- Anti-Phishing filter – Summer '05
- IE 7 – Dec '05

### Anti-Phishing Filter Heuristics

- URL Heuristics
  - URL Tricks – “@” tricks and variants, non standard ports
  - Use of IP Addresses
  - URL Obfuscation – Excessive escaping
  - Links from e-mails – web based e-mail clients
- Web Page Heuristics
  - Detection of Forms
    - Watch specifically for requests for PII/Acct Info
    - Mismatch hosted site vs. where POST goes
  - SSL enabled
  - Mis-Matched Links

Slide Show ▾  
Resume Slide Show



Click to add notes

### Slide Layout



Apply slide layout:



### Content Layouts



### Text and Content Layouts



☒ Show when inserting new slides

# Anti-Phishing Overview

- Overview of releases to counter phishing attacks
  - MS04-004 blocked the use of the “@” sign in URLs - Spring '04
    - Eg. <http://www.rbc.com@http://www.badguys.com>
  - IE for XP SP2 fights phishing with pop-up blocking and improved UI – Summer '04
  - Anti-Phishing filter - Summer '05
  - IE 7 – Dec '05

# Anti-Phishing Filter Heuristics

- URL Heuristics

- URL Tricks – “@” tricks and variants, non standard ports
- Use of IP Addresses
- URL Obfuscation – Excessive escaping
- Links from e-mails – web based e-mail clients

- Web Page Heuristics

- Detection of Forms
  - Watch specifically for requests for PII/Acct Info
  - Mismatch hosted site vs. where POST goes
- SSL enabled
- Mis-Matched Links

*demo*

Slide Show ▼ ✕

[Resume Slide Show](#)

**demo**





